The Analysis of Effective Use of Texts and Graphics in Online Advertising

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Abstract: - Advanced technology has made able for business to transform from traditional practices to modern practices. It is modern in the sense of less physical effort needed to sell and buy things compared to the former way. Online business, online shopping, e-commerce, e-business, are the terms believed used in the business transaction activity conducted over the internet. These activities are mushrooming over years; thus the effective use of text and graphics to increase sales need to be investigated. Text and graphics can be used to deliver information in advertisements. Thus, this study attempts to identify the criteria of effective text and visuals in online stores. Text use is analysed by using the persuasion techniques from The Art of Rhetoric (ethos, logos and pathos) and visual use is analysed by using content analysis. The findings have shown that online stores investigated have all the effective elements in their advertisements. Ethos is used by using arguments and question and answers. Logos is built through celebrity endorsement, award winner reputation, organizations' stamp and approval and quality manufacturing practices. Pathos is shown through the use of positive and enticing words. Visually, the online stores big pictures, action pictures, picture with zoom in feature, pictures with end products as well as providing more than one picture for a product in their advertisements. Thus, the effective use of texts and graphics to increase sales need to be investigated.

Key-Words:- Language use, language in advertising, online business, online stores, online advertising, technology and business, logos, ethos and pathos, digital economy, online shopping, e-commerce.

1 Introduction

Delving a little into those terms, e-business could be defined as buying and selling of goods and services, servicing customers, collaborating with business partners, conducting e-learning and conducting electronic transactions in the business. E-commerce however, has broader area consists of different types of services such as business to business (B2B), Business to Consumers (B2C), Consumer to Business (C2B), Intrabusiness (intraorganizational) commerce, Government to Citizen (G2C) and to others, and Mobile Commerce (M-Commerce) [16] ECAMPO (The Federally Operated Electronic Commerce Acquisition Programme Management Office) (1994) defines e-business in a much direct way, as 'The paperless exchange of business transformation using electronic data interchange (EDI), e-mail, electronic bulletin boards, electronic bulletin boards, electronic funds transfer (EFT) and similar technology.' [16]

Those definitions are able to give narrower context on the nature of online advertising since online advertising is involved along with online business. In tune with the changes in business conduct, advertising as a part of business marketing has also metamorphosed through the evolution in the media. Media, "… has helped create a vast new audience of magnitude which was never dreamed of … This audience, invisible but attentive, differs not only in size, but in kind from any audience the world has ever known. It is a linking up of millions of homes." [19] Nowadays, with the help of the internet, the fastest-growing medium ever [19], advertising has become a giant industry. Advertisers were predicted to spend nearly $600 billion worldwide in 2015; $200 billion in digital ad market. [2] Online marketing has become an explosive growth industry with worth value of $62 billion in the U.S. in 2012 alone. In addition, according to a recent survey, online shopping is among the most common types of activities conducted over the Internet .In local market, statistic shows that more than 6 in 10 Malaysian consumers plan to go online to purchase

flight tickets (67% and third highest globally) and make hotel and tour reservation within the next six months while 58 percent of Malaysian consumers would go online to purchase event tickets such as movie, performance and exhibition. (Nielsen.com) The current trend shows the market is booming right now, so it is an opportunity for retailers to conduct their business online.

Therefore, it is crucial for the entrepreneurs to persuade the customers to purchase the products as the online business is not as simple as what we seen. It can be achieved through advertisement as it is crucial to convince the consumers that the products are better or different from others and to show that the companies are genuine and reliable. Therefore, the advertisement must have some important components that show the aspect of uniqueness and accountability which can be shown through the use of effective features of texts and graphics in the advertisement. Prior to that, the researcher is interested to investigate the effective features of text type and visuals in online advertisements which subsequently help to attract the consumers to buy the products online.

2 Statement of Problem

In his book, The Discourse of Advertising, Guy Cook acknowledged that "writing on advertising is difficult. The reasons are partly formal, arising from its ever-changing uses and combination of language, pictures and music." [4] Advertisement is a complex material. It is an output that involves several inputs to be created, and to analyse the traits of every single input on what makes it effective is a tough job. It is difficult to create because it needs creativity, sensitivity and strategy to make sure the advertisement works, served its purpose. In explaining how advertising is created, Wilmshurst & Mackay (1999) explained that "to ask a creative artist what specific objectives his work was intended to achieve is usually irrelevant. If it is beautiful, moving, thought-provoking, exciting, stirring in its own right that is purpose enough."

Looking into smaller components, language component, what role does language play in an advertisement? The choice of language to convey specific messages with the intention of influencing people is vitally important. Visual content and design in advertising have a very great impact on the consumer, but it is language that helps people to identify a product and remember it [10] The written part of advertisement is not the only component of the message in an advertisement, it works in mixture

with the visual and acoustical portions in an attempt to touch and have emotional impact on individual consciousness. All constituents or all elements of advertisement are associated, interrelated, and they influence each other, accordingly, an alteration in one component generates or causes an alteration in the entire and every part of advertisement [9].

In one study, Johar, Maheswaran & Perachhio (2006) emphasized on the need to improve current understanding of how the globalization of advertising language influence consumer response to advertising messages. Marketing communication is one of the most important factors in an organization success on the market. Advertising in business is a form of marketing communication employed to encourage, persuade, manipulate, or influence an audience (viewers, readers or listeners; occasionally a particular group) to take or continue to take some action [9]. Marketing communication can be used in several different ways and it is important to find the way that will gain the best result. [11] In practice of a real case, Othman et al. (2010) studied about a local company selling fishing equipment through online. It has been found that one of the problem faced by the company is in promotion. Therefore, this study will put in attempt to develop a framework of the combination in visual and text elements in order to create effective advertisement.

In this era of the rise of e-commerce, entrepreneurs are beginning to find ways to do marketing. This is called online marketing. According to technology and marketing blogger and expert Matt Dickman, social media offers entrepreneurs unparalleled opportunity to participant in relevant ways. It also provides a Launchpad for other advertising tactics. It is high power engine on the larger advertising ship (Dickman, 2008). This shows us that in our day and online store advertising is an essential part of a company's advertising mix. Similar strategies are applicable for online store.

An online store reputation is in its communication strategies which involves its participants or customers and the vendors (Kalamas, Mitchell & Lester 2009). By effectively using texts and graphics, brands get publicity, increase brand awareness and possibly brand loyalty. The sales will also increase and other strategies such as the use of hashtags, sharing short videos, going live will increase engagement and also sales. Pustylnick (2011) claims that publishing of photos and videos online can successfully enhance the consumer's brand awareness. The advantage of online stores is mobile friendly and accessible via phone. This is

attractive marketing especially for younger generations.

3 Aim of the Study

The purposes of this study are to identify: i) the features of effective visual use, ii) the features of effective text use, in online stores. Visual involves how messages are conveyed through images. This includes colour, pictures, layout etc. Text is considered as any linguistic signs describing some state, actions and feelings, consequently touching the addressee to respond in one way or another.[9]

4 Review of Past Research

Internet advertising is different from the traditional one as this technological platform has capacities to extend the function of advertising far beyond what traditional media are able to accomplish. The significant difference can be seen from the use of effective features in online advertising offered in online stores itself where in this study, the researcher focused on the use of text type and graphics in whole.

The most significant component of advertisement is its textual part [9]. Text is as a linguistic sign describing some state, actions and feelings, consequently touching the addressee to respond in one way or another. [9] Cook (1992) regards advertisement as a discourse, dividing it into text and context. Text is used to mean linguistic forms, and context includes substance, music and pictures, paralanguage, situation, co-text, intertext, participants and function. [4] The textual part of advertisement can be divided into two smaller components; slogan and body text. Typically, slogans are followed by the body text which transfers more exhaustive information about the product which is advertised.

Occasionally, the textual part of advertisement can comprise merely slogan, however, the body text can never exist unaccompanied. One of the main elements of advertisement is slogan or tagline. Generally, a slogan or a tagline is a short, attention-drawing and easy to think of as well as easy to remember phrase which describes and outlines the company's activity, function as a call to action, pass on and transmit the benefits of a brand, and reapprove an assurance or goes over the main points that information delivered in the advertisement. On the other hand, a good slogan or a useful tagline has further significant functions. That is to say, it must inspire and stimulate the customers to involve and employ company's product or service. Consequently,

tagline must use particular linguistic means with the intention of attracting consumer's attention and pursuing him to purchase a product.

The language of advertising is normally very positive and emphasizes why one product stands out in comparison with another. Advertising language may not always be 'correct' language in the normal sense. A study of vocabulary used in advertising listed the most common adjectives and verbs in order frequency. Some of them are: new, good/better/best, free, fresh, delicious, make, get, give, have, and see. It was highlighted that words good and new were twice more popular than other adjectives. Other features of language used in advertising are hyperbole, neologisms, long noun phrases, short sentences, ambiguity, weasel words, imperatives, euphemisms, avoidance of negatives, simple and colloquial language, familiar language, present tense, simple vocabulary, repetition of the brand's name and slogan, rhyme, rhythm, syntactic parallelism, association, humour and glamorisation. [10] Puntoni, De Langhe & Van Osselaer (2006) studied about bilingualism and the emotional intensity of advertising language and has found that textual information (e.g., marketing slogans) expressed in consumer's native language tend to be perceived as more emotional than messages expressed in their second language.

According to Cook, G. (1992), paralanguage is 'meaningful behaviour accompanying language, such as voice quality, gestures, facial expressions and touch (in speech) and choice of typeface and letter sizes (in writing). Wu, Vassileva, Zhao, Noorian, Waldner & Adaji (2016) came out with effective attributes of picture design for advertising in marketplaces. From their study, they found that if buyers perceive the information pieces shown in a product picture as easy to identify and understand, their feelings towards the shopping task may be more favourable. Another factor, visual complexity of the product image is found negatively influence process fluency. Buyers also mostly influenced by the conspicuousness of a product picture rather than the message conveyed by the product picture. Other than that, they also identified the characteristic of information type to draw customers' attention.

Video-based webpages and picture-based webpages have a better advantage in advertising attention than text-picture-based webpages do. Among these information types, the video-based webpages are the best for drawing user's advertising attention. According to experiment results, the first page is always the best page for advertising attention.

However, even the first page of text-based or text-picture mixed webpages perform worse o advertising attention than any page on the picture-based or video-based websites.

Another important criteria they found was, even if the webpages are on the same website, it is possible for a significant variance in attention to advertisement to occur when changing the placement webpage of the ad. To conclude, they recommended that when deciding whether to spend money on the internet, the client should consider not only the nature of the website, but also the structure of the website, the information type of the website content and the placement priority on the ad itself.

However, to create the effective advertising, the writer need to consider all the aspects as discussed above especially when the primary aim of the advertising is to attract consumer's attention. According to Dyer (1982), advertising involves the process of using language effectively where the advertising language itself is a full loaded language. He observed that the entrepreneurs have to play with words and manipulating and distorting their everyday meanings, break the rules of language for effect, use words out of context and even make up new ones. Thus, it shows that, the use of text and visual as the cores of effective advertising features in online stores should be in a form of persuasion and attractive enough for consumers to fall in love with the products offered.

5 Methodology

This study is a qualitative case study research. According to Bromley (1990), it is a "systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest" [21]. Yin (1994) laid out the case study design must have five components: the research question(s), its propositions, its unit(s) of analysis, a determination of how the data are linked to the propositions and criteria to interpret the findings. [21]

The websites are chosen based on the companies' profit and revenues. According to Tellis (2004), one of the ways to measure advertisement effectiveness is through accounting variables, which is derived from the outcomes of advertising. The accounting variable is the aggregate of the choices of individual consumers, summed up to the level of the firm [18].

Three important accounting measures are a firm's sales, revenues, and profits. Sales in units are the sum of all quantities of a brand purchased by consumers within a particular time period. Revenues are the product of unit sales and the price per unit. Profits are revenues minus costs [18]. "The aggregate measures of sales and revenues give a summary measure of advertising performance. They lack the insight into the nature, depth, breadth, or timing of the response to advertising …" However, "the aggregate measures are not without merit. First, they are relatively easy to obtain. Second, they may be more accurate, especially if they represent the population and note merely a sample." [18]

Based on these arguments, it is appropriate to choose accounting variables as the measurement for effective advertising. Thus, the websites are chosen based on the ranking in Top 100 companies from 2015 Harris Poll RQ Summary Report: A Survey of the U.S. General Public and Opinion Elites using the Reputation Quotient. The 2015 Harris Poll Reputation Quotient (RQ®) measures the reputations of the most visible companies in the U.S. as perceived by the general public.. In 2015, RQ was expanded to measure the reputations of 100 most visible companies in the U.S.

6 Findings

6.1 Features on the Text

6.1.1 The Excerpt below Used Logic and Reasoning (Ethos)

a. Case 1 Product 1:

NATURALLY PROMOTE WEIGHT LOSS – Let's face it, nothing will melt pounds off of you. However, nature has provided us with the ways to gently boost our metabolisms and get us moving! Green tea has been used for centuries in Asian cultures to promote healthy weight loss (and overall health), and has finally gained popularity in the Western world. Today, millions of people around the world incorporate Green Tea into their healthy lifestyles.

Figure 1: Advertisement for Case 1 Product 1

b. Case 2 Product 1:

I have a Healthy Digestive System, should I Still Use Cleanse Colon? Yes, most certainly. Even a healthiest digestive system might have metabolic wastes collected in different parts of digestive tract like colon. This is where the need to flush out accumulated wastes and toxins arises.

Figure 2: Advertisement for Case 2 Product 1
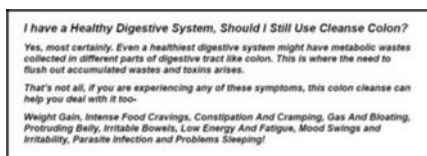
Advertisers use logic and reason to show that their perspective is believable and true. In Case 1 Product 1, the advertisers use logic and reason through few ways. First, the advertisers bring people to face reality that it is very difficult to lose weight. However we are not without help. Advertisers quickly mentioned the nature are able to help and it comes in the form of green tea. The advertisers further mention the benefits and history of green tea in human's health. It is because it has been used in a long time and many people use it so it must be effective. In argumentation theory, it is called Argumentum ad populum which is a fallacious argument where the logic is 'a proposition is true because many people believe it.' In Case 2, the advertiser in use logic in the form of question and answer. It starts with a question with what people normally worry about and reply with the answer that aligned with the reason why people need to buy their product. In this case they use of medical facts.

6.1.2 Excerpt that use of emotion appeals (Pathos)

a. Case 1 Product 2:

DETOX & CLEANSE – Our 14 Day Teatox Cleanses and Purifies the Body of Toxins and Waste. Boost Your Metabolism and Energy Level. Helps Get Rid of Excess Water and Reduces Stress. Detox Tea and Weight Loss Tea. Pleasant & Smooth Taste.
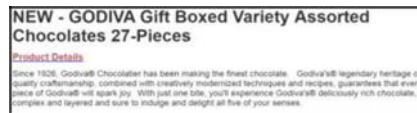
Figure 3: Advertisement for Case 1 Product 2

b. Case 2 Product 2:

With just one bite, you will experience Godiva's deliciously rich chocolate, complex and layered and sure to indulge and delight all five of your senses.

Figure 4: Advertisement for Case 2 Product 2

Emotional appeals involves with the use of persuasive words through positive words like healthy, happy, fun, clean etc. It brings emotion to the people about how they'll feel after they use the product. It can be seen clearly in these 2 cases where the use of word cleanse, purify, boost, pleasant and smooth taste. Case 2 describes the emotion you will feel while and after eating chocolate using word delicious, indulge and delight. It engages with human's emotion of wanting to feel good. Mental engagement has been proven by studies as a motivational force in decision-making process. Connecting a product with the consumers emotionally brings an intimate experience at personal level. It gives a sentiment that this product exists is solely to make them happy. The emotional engagement is able to function as a lure in advertisement so customers will be persuaded to make purchase. Mahmoud & Mohamad Mehdi (2007) has found in their study that recognition of the effects to the buyers is important in designing advertisement [1] while Salman (2011) showed there is a strong relationship in emotional factors for influencing the customer behaviour for shopping and emotional responses have a greater relationship with the consumer behaviour. [1]

6.1.3 Excerpt that use of credibility

a. Case 1 Product 3:

Dehydrated bone broth powder pills are made from Au Bon Broth's 5-Star award winning and best-selling fresh organic bone broth. Our bone broth protein is produces with ingredients that are certified organic, non-GMO, USDA organic pasture raised animals that are ethically and sustainably raised, and contain absolutely NO gluten/soy/dairy/MSG/hormones/antibiotics/ Made in USA, GMP Certified.

Figure 5: Advertisement for Case 1 Product 3

b. Case 2 Product 3:

HEIRESS was launched by the designer house of Paris Hilton in 2006.

Figure 6: Advertisement for Case 2 Product 3

Credibility is conveyed through the mention of a company's reputation, celebrity endorsement, qualified organizations' stamp and approval and award winners. Building credibility is supposed to make customers trust with whom a product's involves with. The motivational factors effective in creating motivation for conduction online purchases include trust and the individual's mental engagement with the product. Trust refers to reliance, delegation of a task to someone, confidence, assurance, belief and faith.

The researchers in the field marketing consider trust as a key structure in individual's tendencies for a variety of purchases. Product 2 in Case 1 uses official declarations: organic, non GMO, USDA organic, NO gluten/soy/diary/MSG /hormones/antibiotics along with phrases like pasture raised animals and ethically and sustainably raised. The advertisers also proudly stated the product is Made in USA, deliberately associating a country's reputation with the product. Since USA is regarded as the most powerful country in the world, for international customers it has positive impression that the product is made with the most advanced technology, the best ingredients and has gone through strict manufacturing procedures. It further validated through GMP Certified stamp.

Product 2 in Case 2 obviously using celebrity endorsement as its main persuasion technique. The product consists of a set of perfume and body cream designed by Paris Hilton, a Hollywood celebrity and

an heiress to a famous hotel chain. The use of celebrities can help advertisements stand out from the surrounding media clutter [13] because for a competitive market with new products appear as fast as a person can blink, celebrity can be as an attention-grabbing mean. Celebrities able to bring customer attention to a product by association. In addition, celebrity endorsement strategy has the ability to create an image for a product through meaning transfer [13].

Image is one of the component in an advertisement. It gives clearer picture of what is being promoted. Image was identifies as one of the factors that can attract consumers' attention to an advertisement [14] In both cases, five criteria have been identified.

6.2 Findings on Visual-Graphics

6.2.1 Big picture

Both cases use big pictures in their website. In Case 1, the size of the product's picture is more than half portion of a computer screen. It draws the eyes to the product, which what the advertisers intend to do. The big pictures also are put in the website's front page. A big size picture has a better impact on consumer's attention than small picture [14] and one of the attention-grabbing tools to attract customers' attention is the size of an element which in this context is the picture element.

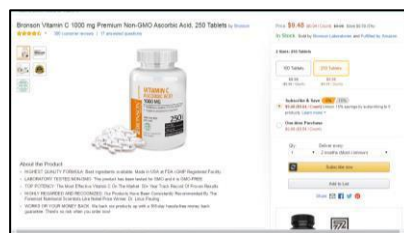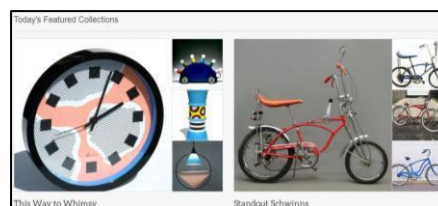Figure 7: Advertisement for Case 1 Product 4

Figure 8: Advertisement for Case 2's Front Page

6.2.2 Action Picture

Action pictures describe how a product works. It gives more information to the customer without having to use words to write the instructions for example. Another benefits of using this type of picture is it put imagination in people's mind about how they will use the product.

Figure 9: Advertisement for Case 1 Product 5

Figure 10: Advertisement for Case 1 Product 4

6.2.3 Zoom in feature

Zoom in feature provide details of a product. Customer can view the details thoroughly before purchasing and getting more information of a product. It gives a sentiment that the seller has nothing to hide.

Figure 11: Advertisement for Case 1 Product 6

Figure 12: Advertisement for Case 2 Product 5

6.2.4 Picture with end products

Putting up pictures that contain the end products gives messages to the consumer of what they may gain from the product. It completes the thought's sequence of why a consumer need a product, how they can use it and what is the end results. In Case 1 is the advertisement of a DIY ball toy. The balls are made through putting the powder in the ball mould, put it into the water and it will come out as a jelly ball. The picture contains images of three balls after they've gone through the process. Consumer will get ideas of what can be expected from the product.

Case 2 shows the image of air fryer product. In the air fryer contains fries and fried chicken after they have been fried using the product.

Figure 13: Advertisement for Case 1 Product 7

Figure 14: Advertisement for Case 2 Product 6

### 6.2.5 More than one picture of a product

A series of picture gives the air of complete view and information about a product. The more information unfolds, the customers would have lesser doubt about a product. Below is an advertisement for a dress in Case 1 and a sneaker in Case 2. The dress advertisement contains six pictures of the dress

consist of various views from different angles. Another additional picture provide the measurement table for customer's reference. For Case 2, the advertiser includes five pictures of the sneakers from various angles as well.

Figure 15: Advertisement for Case 1 Product 8

Figure 16: Advertisement for Case 2 Product 7
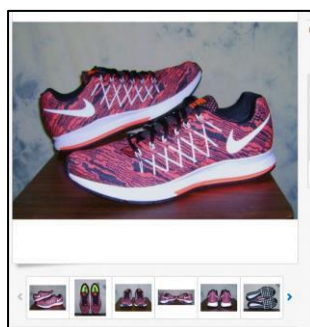
6.2.6 New Findings:

Some other visual elements that accompany these two elements in effective advertisements are the use of minimal colours, attention-grabbing prompter (5200 sold, Only 2 left! Almost gone) highlighted in bold-red text. Other than that, certain types of products also provide a video along with few pictures. The video usually contains information about how the product is used or a commercial ad or a model poses with the product. Usually it can be found in kitchen appliances advertisements, electronic appliances advertisements, clothing advertisements and in other type of products that requires how-to instructions. An interesting finding which in Case 1 store, its front page has a coub video, where a visitor doesn't need to click on play button for the video to play. So when a visitor open the website, he or she can see a picture suddenly moves. It is a really effective attention-grabber.

7 Conclusion and Recommendation

From the findings, it can be concluded that text and visual elements play an important role that makes up the building blocks of what makes an advertisement becomes effective. The persuading process that was implemented through the three means of persuasion techniques to convince customers to buy their products have been carried out in most of their advertisements. When a customer browsing a product, he or she will see the picture of the product first and then, read the product description. Most of the persuasion techniques are implemented in product description section where elaborate information of a product can be found. To capture customers' attention in quick seconds, few criteria of effective picture use can be seen as well.

In conclusion, this study unveils the criteria of the effective use of text and visual in two popular online stores. Since texts and pictures main function is to convey information to the customers [8] both means have been utilized marginally in order to achieve intended effects. Based on the findings, in the text element, all three persuasion techniques are found in the products' advertisements in both online stores.

Persuasions are carried out through the use of enticing and positive words and phrases in order to attract, convince and influence consumers. Visualization is another important mean in the pursuit of persuasion in advertising. The use of big pictures, action pictures, zoom in feature, picture with end products and the advertisers provide more than one picture of a product has been identified in both online stores advertisements. The persuasive effects of texts and visuals in online environment can be considered as a measure for effective factor for online purchases.

In general, most customers make a decision to purchase in online stores by relying on information through a computer screen [8] The way of the information are portrayed and delivered can be manipulated in order to persuade customers into making purchases. However the advertisers do not leave anything by chance. They make sure the consumers are engaged logically and emotionally so the products will stay longer in their mind. It is also important to make sure that the customers can make the decision to purchase by free will. It cannot be denied that it takes much more than effective advertisements for a buyer to make a purchase. For example the consideration of the price, delivery,

website's safety, payment methods etc. However a product's advertisement is one of the factor that involves in the decision-making process.

This study also has found some new interesting findings. Therefore, future researches are recommended to explore the use of these new elements. In fact, visualization not only consist of picture, but it also involves colours, layout etc. Text usage also involves product's name, search key words and etc.

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